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Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

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Sixty-third year

Identical letters dated 5 May 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit the attached Statements of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Georgia, dated 4 and 5 May 2008 (see annex, enclosures 1 and 2).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex were to be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 16, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Irakli **Alasania**
Permanent Representative

08-32937 (E) 120508

Annex to the identical letters dated 5 May 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Enclosure 1

Statement of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Georgia

The Information and Press Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry issued a press release, which, based on information provided by Sokhumi, claims that two Georgian unmanned reconnaissance drones were allegedly downed by the air defence systems of the separatist regime's illegal armed units in the security zone, on 4 May 2008.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Georgia declares with full responsibility that the above-mentioned "information" is yet another provocation of the Russian Federation, which aims at facilitating its military intervention by providing information and propaganda support.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Georgia would like to focus the international community's attention on the fact that the Russian Foreign Ministry acknowledged, in its above-mentioned press release, the presence of the separatists' air defence systems in the security zone and moreover, qualified as lawful their attack on Georgia's unmanned air vehicle. It indicates clearly that the Russian Federation's so-called peacekeeping operation conducted under the umbrella of the Commonwealth of Independent States has evolved into a complete fiction and can be seen as nothing but an open military aggression against Georgia aimed at annexing a part of its internationally recognized sovereign territory.

Unarmed unmanned air vehicles of the Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs always used to fly, still fly and will continue to do so in Georgia's sovereign airspace in order to obtain full information on military intervention of the Russian Federation.

The Russian Federation's attempt to restrict, through so-called peacekeeping troops, Georgia's sovereign right to exercise control over its own airspace is directed at an escalation of the conflict and threatens international peace and security.

Tbilisi, 4 May 2008

Enclosure 2

Statement of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Georgia

On 4 May 2008, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation circulated a piece of misinformation which claims that two Georgian unmanned reconnaissance aerial vehicles (UAVs) were allegedly shot down by "air defence systems" of the separatist regime in the security zone. On the same day the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Georgia made an official statement in which it pointed out that the aforesaid information was yet another provocation aimed at facilitating military intervention by the Russian Federation by providing information and propaganda support. In their official statements, the Ministries of Internal Affairs and Defence of Georgia flatly denied the above "information" as well.

On 5 May 2008, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Georgia addressed the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for Georgia, Mr. Jean Arnault. The Georgian side strongly urged the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia to immediately institute an investigation regarding the presence and utilization of "air defence systems" by the Abkhaz separatists in the security zone and to inform the international community about the results of the investigation in the shortest possible time.

On 5 May 2008, the Georgian side transmitted a note to the Russian side concerning Georgia's withdrawal from the agreement of 19 April 1995 on cooperation between the Ministry of Defence of Georgia and the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation in the anti-aircraft defence sphere.

Tbilisi, 5 May 2008